

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 09MONTEVIDEO437, URUGUAYAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JOSE MUJICA SAYS

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g.

#09MONTEVIDEO437.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09MONTEVIDEO437	2009-07-27 17:15	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Montevideo

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.brecha.com.uy/ediciones/item/8253-el-fantasma-del-viraje>

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMN #0437/01 2081715
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 271715Z JUL 09
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9247
INFO RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 000437

SIPDIS

FOR WHA/BSC MARY DASCHBACH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/26/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UY](#)

SUBJECT: URUGUAYAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE JOSE MUJICA SAYS
U.S. SHOULD COUNT ON HIS FRIENDSHIP (C-AL9-01505)

...
REF: MVD 0411 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: CDA ALFRED SCHANDLBAUER, FOR REASON 1.4 (B)

Summary

¶1. (C) Governing Frente Amplio coalition presidential candidate Senator Jose Mujica told the charge July 23 that the U.S. should count on him as a friend. He noted that he has relationships with and access to leaders within the hemisphere that have difficult relations with the USG, and said that as president he would be happy to serve as an intermediary between the U.S. and any of those leaders as needed. Mujica's visit to the charge's residence marked the first time in the Embassy's collective memory that he had attended an Embassy event. End Summary.

The Frente Amplio comes to lunch

¶2. (SBU) Rounding out a series of lunches at her residence with Uruguay's presidential candidates (septels), the charge hosted the ruling Frente Amplio (FA) coalition ticket of Senators Jose "'Pepe"' Mujica and Danilo Astori July 23. Mujica and Astori stressed the importance of the bilateral relationship with the U.S., discussed the basics of the FA's campaign strategy, and confirmed press reports that Astori will manage Uruguay's economic policy in a Mujica government.

Mujica: Count on me as a friend

¶3. (C) Responding to a question about Mujica's foreign policy views, both Mujica and Astori were quick to state that they see the relationship with the U.S. as fundamentally important, and Mujica said that the U.S. should count on him as a friend. Later, without prompting, Mujica explained that his past -- which includes twelve years in prison for high-level participation in the Tupamaro guerrilla movement #¿NOMBRE? leaders in the region who are not friendly toward the U.S. With that in mind, he offered his assistance as a mediator between the U.S. and any of those leaders to help ease frictions (he used the verb "'aceitar,'" (to oil)) as needed.

Electoral Strategy

¶4. (SBU) Mujica was (probably intentionally) vague about the FA's strategy for winning the presidential elections in the first round, something many analysts believe he must do if the FA is to remain in power. He said only that he believes it will be a hard-fought and clean campaign, and in a caveat stated that it was impossible to control what his supporters would say about his opponents on the Internet. Astori was a little more forthcoming, but the only information outside the public domain that he offered was his observation that their ticket's campaign would likely cost around USD 2 million, which was approximately the same amount Tabare Vazquez spent to win in 2004. Astori speculated that the rival Blancos would spend more. Both Mujica and Astori view Blanco candidate Luis Alberto Lacalle as a serious and formidable opponent.

Comment

¶5. (C) This was the first time in any Embassy employee's memory that Mujica had attended an Embassy event, and he appeared nervous when he first arrived in the charge's residence. He is a famously casual dresser, and news that he has commissioned his first suit before an upcoming meeting in Brazil with President Lula made headlines, but he wore a blazer to lunch. He soon grew more comfortable, though, and began dispensing the homespun wisdom for which he is known as he talked of the difficulty of quitting smoking (he quit four years ago) and his hobby of raising flowers. Much has been made locally of the dynamic between Mujica and Astori, which is commonly believed to be cold. They seemed quite

comfortable with each other, however, even if their differing personalities and styles don't lend themselves to perfect camaraderie.

16. (C) Mujica clearly viewed the encounter as more of an opportunity to get to know one another than as a forum for policy discussion, and so wouldn't be drawn into detail about his plans regarding particular policies or appointments. He did mention China in an admiring tone, relating an anecdote that credited the Chinese government with long-term thinking, but he later joked that those who currently bemoan Yankee hegemony will end up thinking of that as the good old days if the Chinese ever come to exercise as much influence in the region.
Schandlbauer